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Mayor

## COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

Tom Liebel, Chairman

### STAFF REPORT



Thomas J. Stosur  
Director

August 9, 2017

**REQUEST:** Five & Dime (Westside) Local Historic District Designation: Hearing Two

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approval

**APPLICANT:** Baltimore Development Corporation

**STAFF:** Stacy Montgomery

**SUMMARY:** Determination that the proposed designation of Five & Dime (Westside) as a local historic district meets the requirements of *Baltimore City Historic Preservation Rules and Regulations*' Designation of Districts and Landmarks. The designation includes a full and proper study with findings of fact that the proposed district and its boundaries comply with requirements of Local Government Certification under the National Historic Preservation Act, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification and Registration, and CHAP's own criteria for designation.

**HISTORIC DISTRICT NAME:** Five & Dime (Westside)

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Situated within the historic retail core of Baltimore City and on a street grid that largely remains from the original settlement of the area, the proposed Five & Dime historic district demonstrates distinctive characteristics of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial architecture in a variety of styles. Five & Dime comprises about 5 city blocks northwest of the Inner Harbor and immediately adjacent to (west of) the Central Business District. Howard Street continues to serve this area as the primary thoroughfare for public transit, as the light rail tracks replaced the historic streetcar route.

The district is comprised of a wide variety of commercial structures dating primarily from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. A number of the buildings have been modified over time to connect or modernize smaller buildings. Much of this work occurred during the period of significance and resulted from the change in the nature of retail design. The buildings represent a diversity of style and material, ranging from mid-19<sup>th</sup> century 3-story brick gable rowhouses to 5-story cast-iron commercial storefront buildings, to multi-story, half-block masonry department stores.

### HISTORY/SUMMARY SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed Five & Dime local historic district is home to a wide variety of commercial structures in the heart of Baltimore's historic retail district. The proposed district is part of the

larger Market Center National Register Historic District, which is home to large department stores, banking centers, theaters and restaurants. The rise of Lexington Market as one of the premiere city markets in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century spurred the commercial growth in the adjacent blocks. This commercial district developed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was home to many of Baltimore's large department stores. Much of the building stock within the proposed Five & Dime local historic district transitioned from retail-residential-warehouse uses to commercial in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The district houses a variety of warehouses and some early discount and wholesale stores.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as shopping tastes changed, the 200 block of West Lexington Street became home to a variety of "five and dime" stores, like McCrory's, Schulte-United, Woolworth's and Brager-Gutmans. Remodeled or new purpose-built, two- to four-story commercial buildings were erected on this block, with wider street frontages and modern storefronts. Many of the structures were designed by prominent Baltimore architects and architecture firms, including Charles E. Cassell, Henry F. Brauns, Smith and May, Joseph Evans Sperry, John Freund Jr., Josias Pennington, Louis Levi, Thomas W. Lamb, and Simonson and Peitsch.

The 1930s were an architecturally transformative time for the district, as older storefronts were given modern streamlined facades and new five & dime establishments were built in the Art Deco and Moderne styles. The iconic rounded façade of Kresge's and the decorative color tile work on the McCrory's building are just a few examples of the impact this period had on the architecture of the district.

In the 1950s, this district played a major role in the desegregation of commercial establishments, particularly along the 200 block of West Lexington Street. Protests and sit-ins led by the Congress of Racial Equity (CORE), students from Morgan State College and other groups, desegregated lunch counters and helped to open store services to all patrons. Although these were popular retailers, their discriminatory practices during the Jim Crow era meant that African-American patrons were not allowed to participate in ordinary activities like trying on clothing or eating at the lunch counter. From 1953 to 1955, sit-in demonstrations took place at lunch counters in five & dime stores like McCrory's, Woolworths and Reads, all located within the proposed district.

By the 1960s, suburbanization and the desire for auto-oriented retail drew many major retailers out of the historic commercial core of the city and to areas like Edmondson Village, Mondawmin Mall and Towson. The district remained home to smaller retailers; however, many of the buildings were underused. In 1999 the area was named as one of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and in 2001 Baltimore City signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Maryland Historical Trust with the goal of preserving significant City-owned buildings.

### ***Physical Development***

The blocks making up the proposed Five & Dime district are some of the earliest blocks mapped in the city's historic retail core. The area was added to Baltimore City by 1782 with

the annexation of Lunn's Lot and the streets take their names from Revolutionary War heroes.<sup>i</sup> Expansion westward out of the core of Baltimore occurred not only because the Jones Falls river to the east was surrounded by marshland, but because the connection to western Maryland and beyond for trade was critical to the long term success of the city. Commercial development began along Baltimore Street in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Retail expansion north and west occurred slowly over the early 19<sup>th</sup> century reaching a peak between the Civil War and the Second World War. The establishment and growth of Lexington Market, located a block west of the proposed district, drove the development of the city's retail core. The Market was first established in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century; however, the first permanent buildings were constructed in about 1811. As the population expanded into the west side of the city, Lexington Market grew in size and significance.

The proximity to the Lexington Market, the harbor, the National Road (Franklin Street) and later the train yards, made Howard Street and the surrounding retail district a prime location for the establishment of a wide variety of businesses. Early on, the area was primarily residential, with the exception of the warehouses, taverns and inns, as well as stables and carriage shops to service travelers and tradesmen. Commercial establishments large and small took advantage of the location, and by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the intersection of Howard and Lexington Streets was the heart of Baltimore's vibrant shopping district. The construction of department store "palaces" on Howard Street in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries demonstrated the strength and vitality of the retail district and encouraged other retail establishments modernize and expand.

Following World War II, the growth in the district shifted with modern amenities and changing tastes. The large department stores and chain retailers (including the Five & Dimes) set up "suburban" branches in areas like Towson, Edmondson Village, and Belvedere Square. With the growing use and popularity of the automobile, large parking lots drew shoppers to the branches instead of the downtown stores. Following the 1968 riots, safety also became a concern for shoppers, who perceived downtown as a dangerous place.<sup>ii</sup> With the advent of indoor shopping malls, main streets and commercial downtowns across the nation suffered, and Baltimore City was no exception. From 1954 to 1977, downtown retail sales shrank from 20 percent to only 4 percent of the nationwide metropolitan retail sales.<sup>iii</sup> By the late 1970s the major department stores started closing and in the 1980s, Baltimore shifted its commercial focus to the newly-revitalized Inner Harbor.

Fayette and Lexington Streets appear of the *1792 Plan of the town of Baltimore and it's Environs*, while the street now known as Liberty Street was originally labeled as Forest Street. By 1804, Liberty Street and Howard Street are named on the *Warner & Hanna Improved Plan of the city of Baltimore*, while Park Avenue was labeled North Street. By 1822, Park Avenue appears on the *Poppleton Plan of the city of Baltimore*, along with Kimmel Alley, which today runs behind the Hecht/May Company building. The 1822 map shows buildings fronting the streets on all but one of the blocks within the proposed district; however, the early development of this area was primarily residential. Clay Street first appears on an *1851 Plan of the City of Baltimore*. The proposed district is entirely built up in 1851; however, there are not many buildings remaining from this time period.

Transportation along Howard Street shaped the retail district since its beginnings in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Howard Street served as an important transit connection from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, which attracted businesses to the area. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Howard Street connected the harbor to the National Road, serving as a popular carriage route. With the introduction of locomotives, the carriage route along Howard Street became an important means of transporting the goods from rail cars across the city. Since train engines were limited in their access to the streets of Baltimore, horse carriages were still necessary to move loads from one station to the other. In 1832, the B&O Railroad built the Howard Street Spur. Howard Street was an important trolley and streetcar route well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Shoppers relied on the street cars and buses to bring them downtown to do their shopping. The reliance on the automobile changed the nature of retail as shoppers relied on the availability of parking lots more modern suburban stores provided. The introduction of the Light Rail along Howard Street was developed in part with the hopes of reinvigorating the commercial core in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and addressing the issues of parking; however, the Light Rail had little impact on this area of Howard Street.

### ***Social and Cultural History***

The area within the proposed Five & Dime district served as a part of Baltimore's premiere retail corridor for over a century. Although Baltimore Street was originally the center for retail in Baltimore, the intersection of Howard and Lexington Streets and the surrounding blocks quickly developed into the most popular retail destination because of the proximity to transportation and the Lexington Market, as well as the wide variety of retail services that were offered in the district. A description of the area at the time spoke to the success of the retail corridor:

This was North Howard Street. Fashionable shopping center, theater district, university, locale of small merchants in miscellaneous retail trade, with an occasional tavern thrown in for good measure- such were the ingredients that contributed to the throbbing activity of North Howard Street in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>iv</sup>

Baltimore's dominant role in the garment industry in the mid-to-late 19<sup>th</sup> century made garment sales of logical choice for business. Small fabric, ribbon and millinery shops grew into retail clothing stores, several of which were the foundation of Baltimore's most prominent department stores. While the 200 block of North Howard Street was home to more upscale department stores catering to women with the means to spend a day of leisure shopping and dining, stores within the proposed Five & Dime district served those with more modest incomes. In 1923, two bargain stores dating to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century merged to create the Bernheimer-Leader Department store at the southwest corner of Howard and Lexington Street (now 301 West Lexington Street). Although this enterprise aimed at serving a wealthier clientele they quickly fell into financial distress and in 1925 sold the company and building to the May Company, the highest grossing national department store at the time.<sup>v</sup> The store would later merge with another Baltimore department store giant, the Hecht Company. CHAP designated this building as a local landmark in 1999.

The other department store in the district was Brager-Gutmans, which was established in its current location as Julius Gutman & Co. circa 1877, and remained in business on Lexington

Street for over a century. The department store offered discounted merchandise for a budget-conscious clientele. The original owner, Julius Gutman, was a Jewish German immigrant who started his business with one small storefront on West Lexington, near the corner of Park Avenue (203 W. Lexington Street). The business expanded several times, with renovations that incorporated the additional properties into the growing store. In 1929, Gutmans became the first downtown department store in Baltimore with an escalator.<sup>vi</sup> In 1959, the retailer merged with Brager-Eisenberg, another nearby store, and formed the Brager-Gutman store.

While the 200 block of North Howard Street was home to large department stores targeting those wealthy enough to spend a day of leisure shopping, the blocks to the south attracted discount merchandisers who also flourished. Aside from Brager-Gutman, a number of national five and dime stores established themselves along the 200 block of West Lexington Street, including Woolworths, McCrory's and Shulte-United, while Kresge's opened up in the 100 block of West Lexington Street. These retailers started out with smaller storefronts, like Woolworths, which started out at 223 West Lexington Street, and later expanded into 225 as well. McCrory's moved from a smaller storefront on Howard Street to the Art Deco storefront on West Lexington Street and three buildings on North Howard Street (117-121 North Howard Street) in 1929. Kresge's expanded their building in the 1950s to create additional space for a restaurant and services.

By the 1930s, Howard and Lexington Streets were home to a wide variety of retail and discount stores featuring modern storefronts and amenities, and discounted wares. An article in the *News American* characterized the success of the discount stores in this area, writing "The Depression was made for Julius Gutman's and Lexington Street, Baltimore's great thoroughfare of the cheap store, the five-and-dime and those places that were in a perpetual state of going out of business."<sup>vii</sup> These discount stores, along with the nearby banks, theaters and restaurants, contributed to the vitality of the commercial district for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Aside from retailers, the commercial district supported other activities like banking, dining and entertainment, attracted to the concentrated volume of shoppers and the proximity to other businesses. When the Border State Savings Bank (200 West Fayette Street) opened in 1893, it was part of a group of banking facilities that opened as a result of the neighboring retail expansion. Subsequently, other offices and banks followed suit and opened around the commercial center. Several banks are located within the district, including the Park Bank (100-104 West Lexington Street), the National Howard Bank (100 North Howard Street), and the Equitable Trust Bank (111-117 Park Avenue). Each of the banks is situated on the corner of their respective block and was designed to promote the permanence and security of the banking industry in the retail district in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Park Bank, which formed in 1917, made its home on Lexington Street from its formation in 1917. In 1921, the bank purchased the building at the northwest corner of Liberty and Lexington Streets from the Consolidated Gas, Electric Light, and Power Company of Baltimore. The building served as the bank's headquarters and office space for other financial businesses, including the Beneficial Loan Society, Kahn & Maynard Realtors, and Community Finance Service, Inc.<sup>viii</sup> From 1927-1928, the Bank building underwent two expansions to

accommodate the offices of the president, electric elevators and larger banking rooms.<sup>ix</sup> In 1917, Webster Bell, the Bank's president, told the Baltimore Sun that the bank "has always been located in the shopping district and has a large clientele among the women who deal in that section. The new home gave the bank greater opportunities for expanding."<sup>x</sup> The Park Bank is one example of the strong banking industry present in the Five & Dime district.

The retail district was also an entertainment hub, with theaters and movie houses offering drama and air conditioning. There were several theaters in the district, including The Howard (113 N. Howard Street), The Garden (114 West Lexington Street), The Arcadia (121 North Howard Street), and The Clown (112 North Howard Street). The Howard Theater was originally constructed in 1908 at the beginning of a boom era in the construction of movie houses. The theater was constructed specifically for the presentation of motion pictures, and was initially a small theater that was later expanded and remodeled as movie houses became increasingly popular. Originally built as the New Pickwick, the theater's design is attributed to architect Franz C. Koenig of Philadelphia who was a notable architect of nickelodeons (movie theaters that cost five cents) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Howard Theater was originally opened by R.H. Baum and J. Howard Bennett in September of 1908 as the Pickwick or New Pickwick Theater (to avoid confusion with the Pickwick Theater located on Lexington Street).<sup>xi</sup> The New Pickwick Theater was a comparatively inexpensive theater and attracted a variety of patrons and was a popular hide-out for school kids skipping class.<sup>xii</sup> In 1924, the name was changed to the Howard Theater and reopened under new management.

The Garden Theater opened in 1915 and provided both a large movie theater and a dancehall to its patrons. The theater was designed by internationally prominent movie theater architect Thomas W. Lamb with a large theater downstairs and the "Jardin de Dance" upstairs. The theater cost nearly \$1,000,000 to construct and could accommodate 6,000 people, making it one of the largest in the City at the time.<sup>xiii</sup> In 1927 the building was remodeled and renamed Keith's after a new owner. The theater closed in 1955 and the large auditorium and dancehall on Clay Street was later demolished.

Aside from shopping, banking and entertainment, visitors to the retail district could find many places to eat and drink. Small stand-alone restaurants and taverns were located at 103 North Howard Street, 102 North Liberty Street, 104 Park Avenue and 226 West Fayette Street. The five & dimes and department stores also served food and drink at their restaurants and lunch counters.

Not all of the businesses in the downtown retail center were open to all citizens of Baltimore. Department stores catered to middle- and upper-class white women who had the time and money to shop as an activity of leisure. Following the introduction of Jim Crow-era social laws that limited the rights of African-Americans, most department stores were not open to or were unwelcoming toward people of color. Five and dime retailers were much the same. Patrons of color were not allowed to shop in all areas of the store, were not allowed to try on items of clothing or return items they purchased and were not allowed to dine at the lunch counters or in the restaurants.<sup>xiv</sup> Furthermore, these stores did not hire African-American employees. By the mid-1920s, most stores had formal policies in place that excluded people of color, closing

existing accounts and forcing African Americans to travel as far as New York City to do their shopping.<sup>xv</sup>

The exclusion of African-Americans from retail activities was so pervasive that the *Afro-American* regularly published a list of stores that held “Anti-Negro Policies,” awarding onions to these stores (and orchids to stores with inclusive policies). In 1945, the paper awarded orchids to Wilber-Roger’s (105 West Lexington Street) and the Hixbie Dress Shop (106 West Lexington Street) and onions to The May Company (118 North Howard Street) and Julius Gutman (201 West Lexington Street).<sup>xvi</sup> The paper remained critical of local and national retailers and their policies toward African-Americans.

By the 1950s, efforts to desegregate retail establishments brought change to the five & dime retailers on the 200 block of West Lexington Street. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) used “moral suasion and demonstration” to open the downtown shopping experience to all patrons by holding sit-ins at lunch counters and restaurants.<sup>xvii</sup> CORE’s first successes came with the national retailers and by the end of 1953, Kresge’s, Woolworths, and McCrory’s opened their doors to all patrons. Read’s Drug Store, a Baltimore Chain, took longer; however, the efforts of CORE and students from Morgan State College at the downtown and Northwood Shopping Center locations led to Read’s opening up all services to all patrons by the end of January 1955.

With the success of these impromptu sit-in demonstrations at the five and dimes, Civil Rights activists turned their attention to the larger department stores, where they encountered more push-back. In 1960, Hochschild-Kohn was the first of the downtown department stores to open their services to all. The other department stores, including Mays, followed suit that same year.<sup>xviii</sup> These blocks played a significant role not only in the commercial development of Baltimore City, but in the desegregation of retail stores throughout the city.

### ***Architecture***

The proposed Five & Dime district is home to a wide variety of commercial architecture, ranging from pre- Civil War era residential buildings with small commercial enterprises to late 19<sup>th</sup> century steel frame storefronts to 1930’s streamlined Art Deco. These styles are reflected in banks, theaters, bargain stores and department stores. The variety of the building fabric is what makes this district architecturally significant.

The earliest development period for the district dates to the decades before the Civil War. The two- and three-story buildings at the south end Howard Street, north of Fayette Street (with the exception of the Classical Revival Bank at the southwest corner) date to the 1830s-1850s. These Federal and Italianate rowhouses have been altered to accommodate their commercial uses. Storefronts were added to several of these buildings between 1940 and 1950. Other buildings in the district that date to the mid-to-late-19<sup>th</sup> century include the buildings at 142-144 West Fayette Street, and 111 Park Avenue.

In the 1850s, the advent of cast iron front construction changed the form of commercial construction. The Sun Iron Building was built in Baltimore in 1851, and others soon followed.<sup>xix</sup> Cast iron front construction allowed for larger storefronts with larger sheets of

glass, greater building height, new design elements, and more light into the stores themselves. The construction was also touted as being “fire proof.” By the 1870s, with the expansion of the railroad and growth in trade, iron front construction brought larger, grander buildings, with taller floors and slender columns. An example of this type of construction in the district is the building at 121 North Howard Street which was constructed circa 1875. This five-story, four-bay building has elements of the Italianate style and features deeply recessed, flattened arch windows separated by narrow Corinthian columns. The top three stories are separated by decorative cornices. There is a wide, bracketed cornice at the top of the building.

Although cast iron front buildings were very popular at this time, masonry construction continued to be popular in the period after the Civil War. Two notable examples of masonry construction in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century include 119 North Howard Street and 200 West Fayette Street. 119 North Howard Street was constructed ca. 1885 and features a double façade. This four-bay, five-story Queen Anne style commercial building was constructed of brick with molded brick detailing. The fenestration follows a 1-2-2-1 pattern, where the windows on the side bays are singular double-hung and are topped with a single transom window and a corbelled brick hood. The central windows are paired with large transom windows and corbelled brick hoods. A string course and decorative frieze are located below the brick cornice. The façade is divided horizontally by cornices and decorative brick friezes above the third, and fourth story, as well as vertically, with flat pilasters punctuating each bay.

200 West Fayette Street is a 4-story brick building that was constructed for the Border State Saving Bank ca. 1892. The building was most likely designed by Baltimore architect Henry F. Brauns, who designed several of Border State’s banks in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The bank was built at an approximate cost of \$40,000 with large vaults in the rear and public halls on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> stories. The building rests on a rusticated granite foundation; the tall first story is constructed of brownstone, and the top three stories are constructed of brick laid in common bond. The polychrome stonework, belt courses, conical tower, and deeply recessed windows, and arched lintels on the fourth story reflect the Romanesque Revival style that was popular during the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The closely placed, tall, narrow windows, thin belt courses, and narrow conical tower give the upper stories of the building a delicate appearance in contrast with the heavy and monumental appearance of the first story.

The period between 1850 and 1880 witnessed the significant growth of commercial buildings where purpose-built commercial buildings replaced earlier residential buildings with a small commercial concern. The advent of steel framing allowed for larger buildings and iron fronts brought larger windows and new details to the Baltimore streetscape. The north side of the 100 block of West Lexington Street features a wide variety of 3-story iron front stores with first story storefront windows with some modern alterations.

In 1888 Hutzler’s Palace, the City’s first grand department store, was constructed one block north of the proposed district. This large, modern, purely commercial shopping “palace” brought a shift to commercial development along Howard Street. In 1897 Hochschild-Kohn built their “palace” in the same block of Howard Street and Stewarts constructed their grand department store in 1900 in the block north of the district. Other commercial enterprises, large and small replaced their traditional residential buildings with purpose-built commercial



buildings at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The last “palace” to be constructed in the area was the Bernheimer-Leader Department store at 118 North Howard Street, constructed in 1925 in the Neoclassical style. The eight story building utilized steel framing and concrete enclosed with façade of pink granite, Indiana Limestone, and buff-colored brick with a terra cotta cornice and copper eave.<sup>xx</sup>

The next major event to impact the architecture of the historic district was the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904. The proposed district lies just outside the area impacted by the fire, which was generally bounded by Liberty Street to the west and Lexington Street to the north. However, the fire tested the newer iron-front construction and the innovation of steel framing. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a greater variety of architecture was constructed in the district, including more buildings that used steel frame construction as a method of fire-proof construction. An example in the district is 109 N. Howard Street, formerly Howard’s Furniture. This four-story, two-bay brick structure was built circa 1910 and spanned two lots. Two large bay windows cover almost the whole façade. Each bay features a three-story, bowed ribbon of three double-hung windows over decorative spandrel panels. The panels feature designs in relief. The building is topped with an ornate, bracketed cornice and a parapet wall. Thick brick columns run along the side and center of the building. Other examples of steel frame construction include 106 West Lexington Street (designed by architect Louis Levi), 114 West Lexington Street, and 104 Park Avenue.

The Park Bank Building at 100 West Lexington Street is another fine example of early 20<sup>th</sup> century “fireproof” construction. Built in 1905 for the offices of the Consolidated Gas, Electric Light, and Power Company of Baltimore, this five-story, steel frame, three-part commercial block buildings rounds the corner of Liberty and Lexington Streets. The building was constructed with a polished granite base, brick middle, and stone top, with decorative stone bandings between each layer. Double-hung tripartite windows in vertical bays are separated by decorative stone work on the upper stories, while single double-hung windows are located at the ends of the original building and the additions. When it was originally constructed, the building featured a deep, highly decorative bracketed stone cornice. In 1927 and 1928, as the bank expanded, architect Josias Pennington designed the two two-bay additions at the end of the building on Lexington and Liberty Streets. It is likely that at this time, a portion of the original cornice was removed and the stone balustrade at the roofline was installed to unite the additions with the original building.

The former National Howard Bank at 100 North Howard Street represents another early 20<sup>th</sup> century trend in commercial architecture. During this time, many banks constructed small scale but elaborately detailed buildings to represent their wealth, security and continuity. The ability to build a small bank in a prime location and use expensive interior and exterior finishes advertised the strength of the institution. The National Howard Bank is a one story Classical Revival style building constructed in 1902 and was designed by Joseph Evans Sperry. The classical temple form remains although the entry has been modified.

Another example of Classical Revival in the district is the building at 117 N. Howard, which was constructed circa 1908. The three-bay, five-story building is constructed of brick with stone detailing. The building was a product of the architectural firm of Simonson and Peitsch.

Each of the top three stories features a ribbon of three double-hung windows. The third and fourth story windows are flanked by large flat brick pilasters with decorative stone capitals on either side. The fourth story windows are arched and feature an ornamental stone hood with a large central keystone. The fifth story windows have a thick stone sill and lintel, which run the length of the façade. The building is topped with a large, dentiled stone cornice and brick parapet wall with arched openings trimmed in stone.

Other buildings dating to the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century include the Equitable Trust Building at 111-117 Park Avenue (circa 1908), the Pickwick Theater at 113 North Howard Street (circa 1908), and the Victorian Commercial building at 202 West Fayette Street (circa 1900).

The period between World War I and World War II saw the next major building campaign as the Art Deco and Moderne styles brought clean lines and modern materials to commercial architecture. Examples of this style include 201-13 W. Lexington Street, the former Brager-Gutman Department Store, which was designed in its current form by Smith and May, with earlier work by Charles E. Cassell and John Freund Jr. The “high rise” building was constructed in its current form in 1929 and encapsulates the entire corner of Lexington Street and Park Avenue. This modern building was constructed of brick with limestone detailing. The building is four stories tall at the corner of Lexington and Park with an eight-story building facing West Lexington Street and a nine-story building fronting on Park Avenue. The paired windows on the facades feature limestone frames, lintels, and sills. Decorative limestone panels are located below each pair of windows. Limestone pilasters in the entablature lead to a limestone cornice. The eight and nine story sections of the buildings feature a decorative limestone cornice below the eight-story and transom windows below the limestone cornice. The verticality of the building is emphasized by the continuous vertical limestone bands between the windows and the thick brick pilasters that surround the window pairs.

One of the finest examples of the Art Deco Style is the Kresge’s Building at 119 West Lexington Street. The three story building features a dramatically curved façade, double height metal windows with decorative panels, white glazed terra cotta tiles and a clock in the 3<sup>rd</sup> story curved window. The store was constructed in 1938 and likely designed by one of Kresge’s staff architects. An addition that fronts on Liberty Street was constructed in 1955 and was designed by Emil G. Jehle, a staff architect who designed a number of Kresge’s stores throughout the country.<sup>xxi</sup>

Other distinctive examples of the Art Deco style include Read’s Drug Store, McCrorys and Schulte-United. The Read’s Drug Store building at 123-127 North Howard Street was designed by the architectural firm Smith and May and was completed in September 1934. This four-story building features four large entrances on nearly identical street-facing elevations. Art Deco details include the bas-relief panels referencing Baltimore’s maritime trade history along the 4<sup>th</sup> story, the chevron-shaped flagpole, and the two-story steel-framed windows.

The McCrory’s building at 227 West Lexington Street was constructed in 1930 to accommodate the new home of the J. G. McCrory’s store. The two-story building cost \$65,000 to build. The first story housed the commercial storefront topped with a solid blue band of tile,

which once held the McCrory's logo. The second story has a ribbon of single-pane casement windows topped with small, single-pane fixed windows. Each window has a decorative tile sill and a band of decorative tile. Above the windows is a band of alternating chevrons and a decorative frieze and cornice. The colorful tiles feature light blue backgrounds with geometric yellow patterns. The decorative tiles have thick black outlines that contrast with the white background tiles. The unique use of materials and color makes this building stand out against typical stone and brick façades.

215-219 W. Lexington Street is a three-bay, three story, Moderne commercial building that was home to the Schulte United Five and Dime Store. The Schulte-United building was constructed of stone and featured three glass storefronts on the first story, with deeply recessed entries, all of which have been obscured or altered. The second and third stories each have 6 large double-hung windows topped with a 5-lite ribbon of windows. The bays are separated by four flat pilasters topped by squared capitols. The windows on the second and third stories are separated by decorative rectangular panels. The parapet features the "Schulte-United" name with carved golden eagles holding shields on either side. The top of the parapet is broken where the four pilasters seem to extend above the roofline and are capped with small stone domes.

The diversity of architectural styles and materials is unique to this commercial district and to the City of Baltimore. A number of significant Baltimore architects designed the buildings within the district. Although many of the storefronts have been modified over time, this trend has occurred during multiple time periods in the Five & Dime district's history as commercial tastes have changed.

### **PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The period of significance for the Five & Dime Historic District is from 1830 to 1968. The first building constructed which still remains today at the corner of Fayette and Howard Street dates to approximately 1830; other early buildings which still remain date to the 1850s. This time period from 1830 to 1850 represents the earliest development of this area, which was mostly residential, but slowly became commercial. Buildings from this time have first story alterations that allowed for limited commercial uses, which were common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. By 1968 the reliance on the automobile and rioting following the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. dramatically impacted downtown retail cores, including the core of Baltimore City. Shoppers now chose suburban branches with large parking lots and an increased sense of security. By the 1970s retailers began to abandon their downtown stores in favor of suburban and indoor mall locations and in the 1980s, the city shifted its retail focus to the Inner Harbor.

### **BOUNDARIES OF THE DISTRICT**

The proposed boundaries of the Five & Dime local historic district are generally West Fayette Street to the south, North Liberty Street to the east, Clay Street and West Lexington Street to the north, and the buildings on the west side of North Howard Street to the west. Specifically, the district boundary begins at the northwest corner of North Liberty Street and West Fayette Street, extending north along North Liberty Street to its intersection with Clay Street. The boundary then extends west along Clay Street for one block to Park Avenue. The boundary then runs south for one block along Park Avenue. The boundary turns west again at West

Lexington Street toward North Howard Street. The boundary includes buildings fronting on both sides of the 100 block of North Howard Street. The boundary turns east at the intersection with West Fayette Street.

This boundary was largely established because it encompasses the majority of the Five & Dime retailers and local department stores and the variety of distinctive architecture that embodies the historic retail center of Baltimore City as well as the historic means of access along Howard Street. The character of the buildings to the northeast of the proposed district is smaller and older rowhouse style commercial establishments, many of which are historically associated with Baltimore's Chinese community. Many of the buildings to the northwest of the district (along North Howard Street) are larger in scale and have already been individually listed on the Baltimore City Landmark list. The large Department store buildings in the 200 block of North Howard Street are not included in the district because these buildings represent the beginning of the era of grand department store palaces, constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and targeted a different clientele of middle to high income shoppers, whereas the department stores and five and dimes within the district were constructed in the 1920s and 1930s and targeted lower and middle income buyers. The buildings to the south of Fayette Street are not included because they are much larger in character and are more heavily concentrated with modern intrusions like parking garages. The buildings to the east of the district are larger in scale and more closely associated with the Central Business District, while the buildings to the west (along North Eutaw Street) are not historic and are more closely associated with Lexington Market.

#### **FINDINGS OF FACT:**

The following findings of fact support that the proposed district and its boundaries comply with the following:

1. Requirements for Local Government Certification under the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S. Code., Chapter 3025, § 302503);
2. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification and Registration; and
3. The Commission's Own Historic Preservation Procedures and Guidelines

#### **Local Government Certification under the National Historic Preservation Act**

Section 302503 of Chapter 3025—Certification of Local Governments—within the National Historic Preservation Act outlines the requirements for a local government to be a certified program under the Act:

##### **§ 302503. Requirements for certification**

(a) APPROVED STATE PROGRAM.—Any local government shall be certified to participate under this section if the applicable State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Secretary, certify that the local government—

(1) enforces appropriate State or local legislation for the designation and protection of historic property;

(2) has established an adequate and qualified historic preservation review commission by State or local legislation;

(3) maintains a system for the survey and inventory of historic property that furthers the purposes of chapter 3023 [State Historic Preservation Programs];

- (4) provides for adequate public participation in the local historic preservation program, including the process of recommending properties for nomination to the National Register; and
- (5) satisfactorily performs the responsibilities delegated to it under this division.

CHAP meets the above requirements. It is supported by local legislation for the designation and protection of historic properties. It has a qualified local historic preservation commission based in Article 6 of the City Code. It has a system of survey and inventory of local historic properties. It has a process enabling public participation in the identifying and designating of historic properties and districts.

### **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification and Registration**

The Secretary of the Interior provides guidance and standards for local governments seeking to undertake surveys of their historic resources. In *Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*, the Secretary of the Interior presents the "Standards for Preservation Planning, Identification, Evaluation, and Registration." The complete list of the standards within the four areas is in Appendix B. The standards for Identification and Registration are below:

#### *Standards for Identification:*

Standard I. Identification of historic properties is undertaken to the degree required to make decisions.

Standard II. Results of identification activities are integrated into the preservation planning process.

Standard III. Identification activities include explicit procedures for record-keeping and information distribution.

#### *Standards for Registration:*

Standard I. Registration is conducted according to stated procedures.

Standard II. Registration information locates, describes, and justifies the significance and physical integrity of a historic property.

Standard III. Registration information is accessible to the public.

CHAP meets the above standards of the Secretary of the Interior. Procedures have been undertaken to carefully identify historic resources within the Five & Dime (Westside) district. This information will be integrated into the decision-making process for application review and neighborhood planning for the local historic district. Procedures clearly lay out the processes by which the district is surveyed and considered for local district designation, and all information is available to the public.

### **Commission's Own Historic Preservation Procedures and Guidelines**

Staff applied the Criteria for Evaluation in Section 2.2 Criteria for Designating Districts and Landmarks of CHAP *Rules and Regulations*. In addition, the staff applied Section 2.3 Designating a Historical and Architectural Preservation District, Step 1 Historical Assessment and Property Owner Survey and Step 2: Analysis.

#### *Criteria for Evaluation*

The quality of significance in Baltimore history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, public interiors, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

1. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Baltimore history; or
2. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in Baltimore's past; or
3. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
4. That have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in Baltimore history or prehistory.

Staff determined that the proposed Five & Dime (Westside) district is eligible for local historic district designation under Criteria for Evaluation 1 and 3, and that based on Step 1: Historical Assessment and Property Owner Survey, and Step 2: Analysis, the Five & Dime (Westside) District designation should proceed to Step 3: Designation. At the May 9, 2017 hearing, the Commission concurred with this finding, directing the staff to produce this full and proper study and findings of fact. At the June 13<sup>th</sup> briefing session the commission directed the staff to move forward with the boundaries that were presented in the May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017 CHAP hearing.

*Criterion 1:*

The Five & Dime (Westside) district is significant under Criterion 1 because of its association with the retail history of Baltimore City, including its early development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the events leading to desegregation that occurred in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The buildings within the Five & Dime District represent the range of commercial buildings constructed in Baltimore City since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Early three-story gable brick rowhouses (that likely pre-date the Civil War) sit on the same block as early 20<sup>th</sup> century multi-story department stores and Moderne five & dime retailers. Located within the heart of Baltimore's historic retail district and along the historic streetcar corridor, the proposed Five & Dime district was home to banks, theaters, restaurants, and local and national retailers, including Shulte-United, Kresge's, Woolworths, Brager-Gutman's, McCrory's, the Hecht Company, and Read's Drug Store. In the 1950s, sit-in demonstrations played an important role in desegregating the lunch counters at these retailers.

*Criterion 3:*

The Five & Dime (Westside) district is significant under Criterion 3 because it represents an eclectic mix of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial architecture. Many of Baltimore's most notable architects, including Charles E. Cassell, Henry F. Brauns, Smith and May, Joseph Evans Sperry, John Freund Jr., Josias Pennington, Louis Levi, Thomas W. Lamb, and Simonson and Peitsch, designed the buildings in this district. Many of the buildings evolved over time to reflect the changing needs of the Baltimore retail community, the most prominent changes coming in the 1920s and 1930s when large department stores and Five & Dime retailers moved into the area, bringing modern design. Fine architectural detailing from both

the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including colorful tile work, cast iron facades, and decorative brick and stonework, remain intact.

### **CONTRIBUTING AND NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS**

Staff has determined through a survey of the 50 properties within the proposed Five & Dime (Westside) local historic district, that two (2) buildings are non-contributing. There are also five (5) vacant lots that are considered non-contributing. The addresses of the properties are noted in Appendix A. Non-contributing buildings are those which fall outside of the period of significance, which lack architectural integrity, or which hold no association to the district's or the city's history. As new information is gained about the district and its buildings, the Commission will re-evaluate these determinations.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**Staff recommends approval of the determination that the proposed designation of Five & Dime (Westside) as a local historic district meets the requirements of *Baltimore City Historic Preservation Rules and Regulations*' Designation of Districts and Landmarks. The designation includes a full and proper study with findings of fact that the proposed district and boundaries comply with requirements of Local Government Certification under the National Historic Preservation Act, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Identification and Registration, and CHAP's own criteria for designation.**





**Eric Holcomb**  
**Director**

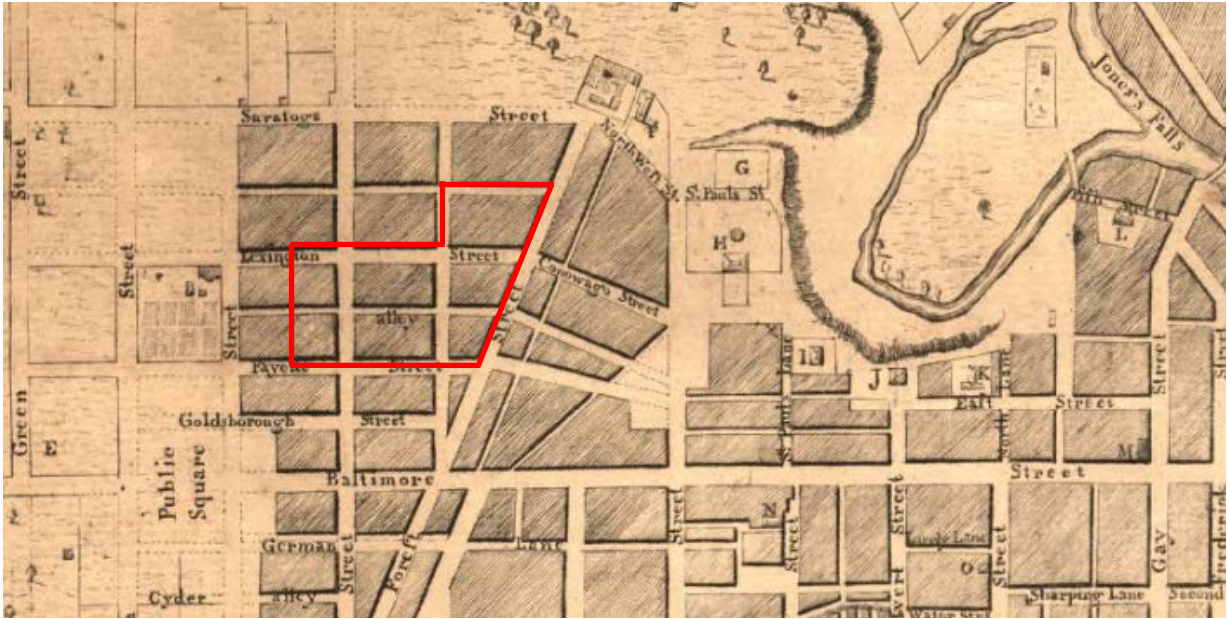
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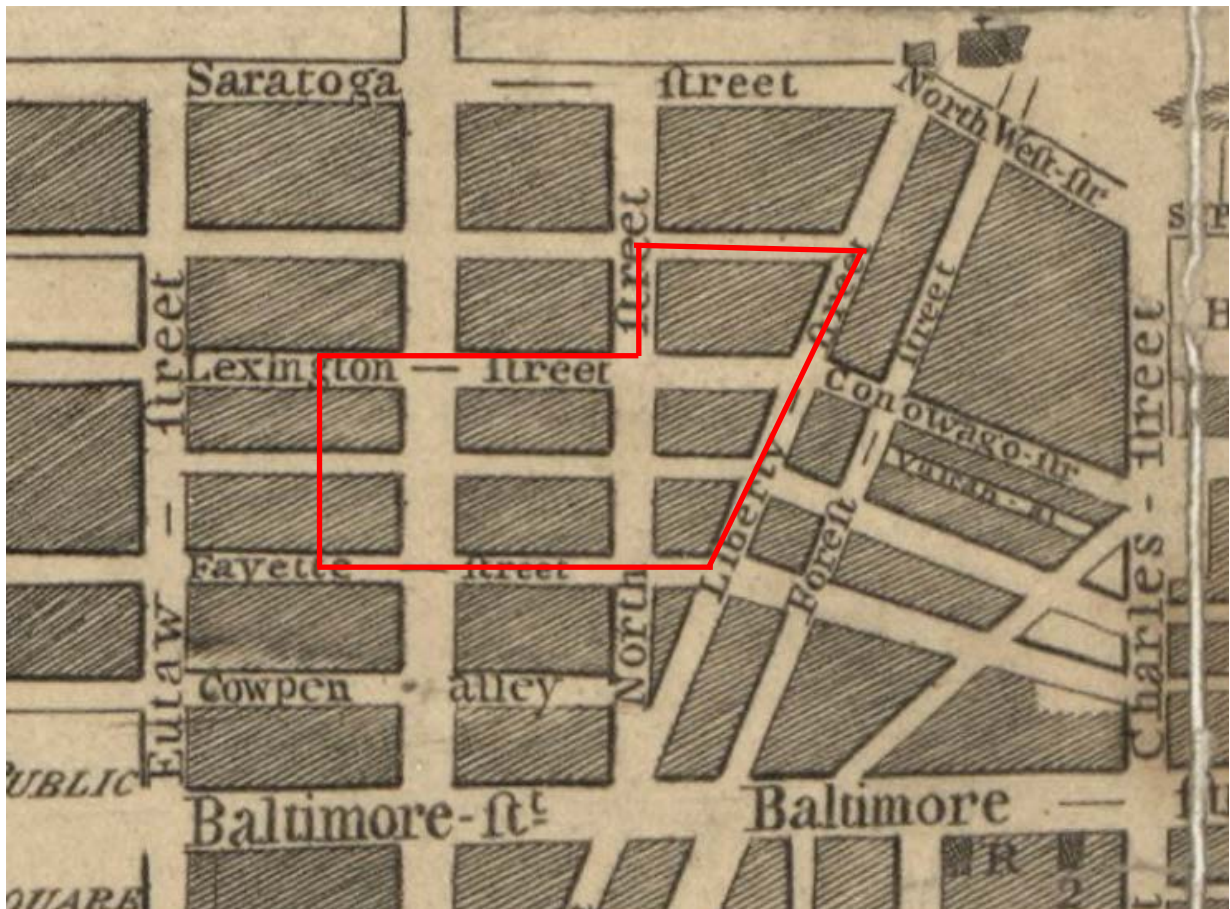
Five and Dime  
Historic District

-  Proposed Five & Dime Historic District
-  Existing Baltimore City Landmarks



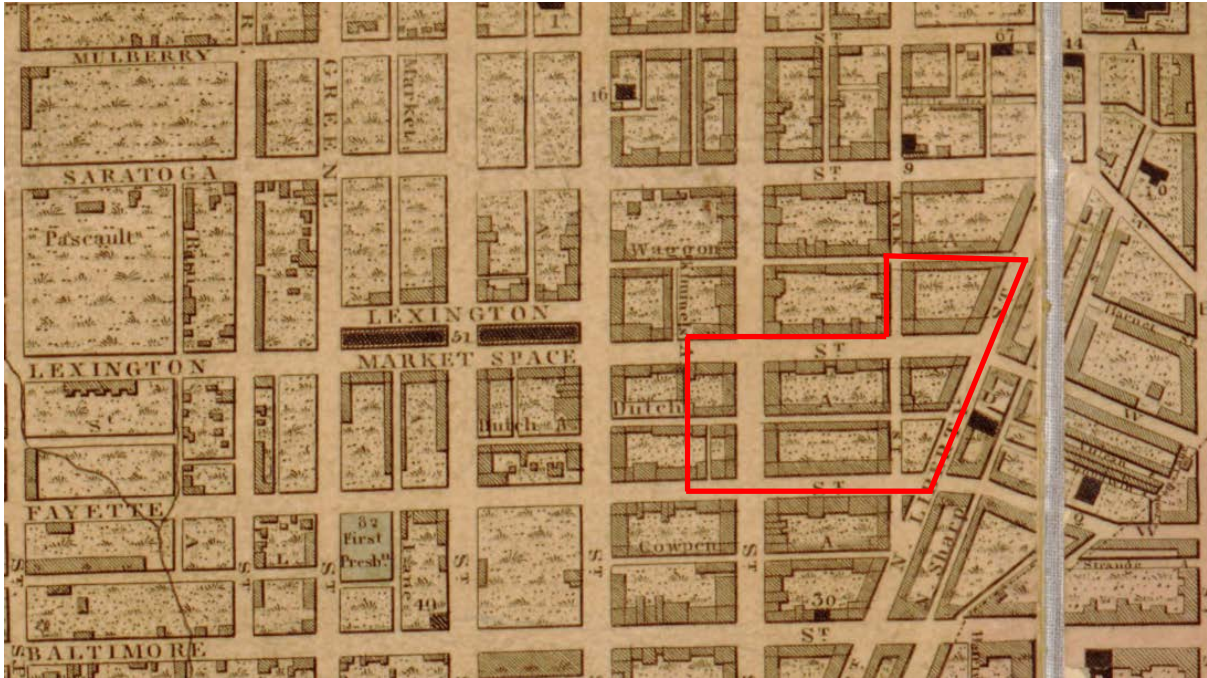


1792 “Plan of the town of Baltimore and its environs”

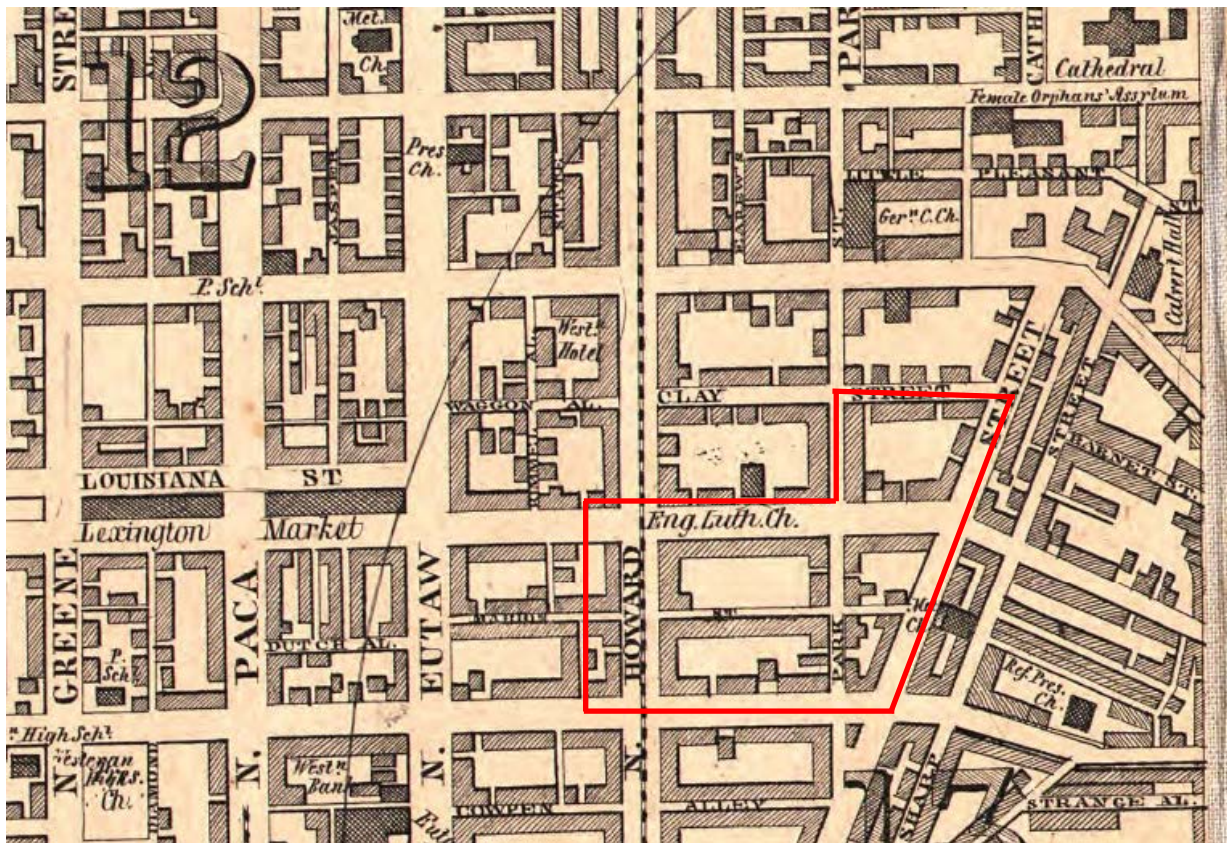


1804 Warner & Hanna “Improved plan of the city of Baltimore”



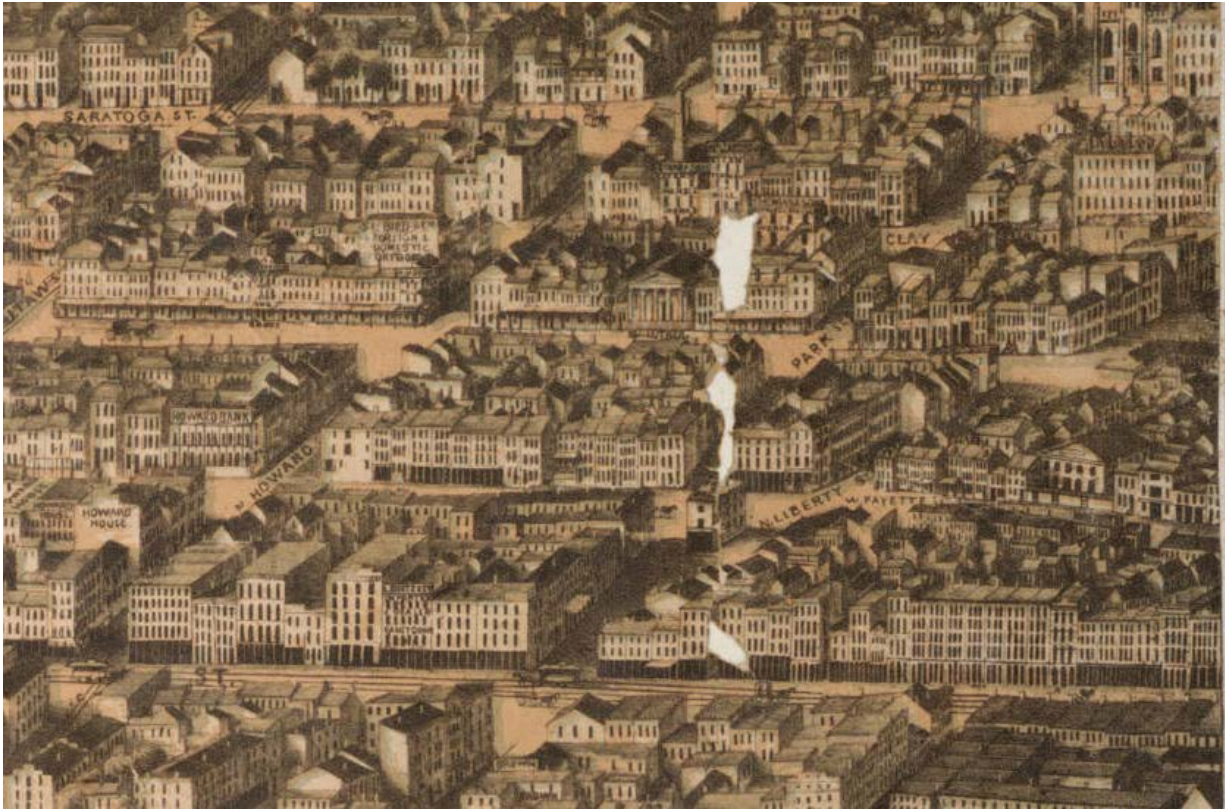


1822 Poppleton Plan of the City of Baltimore



1851 Plan of the City of Baltimore, Maryland (Sidney & Neff)





**Sachse's Bird's Eye View of City of Baltimore 1869**



**1912 "A birds-eye view of the heart of Baltimore"**





**Aerial View of Boundaries**



**Park Avenue & West Fayette Street facing north into the district**





**West side of 100 Block of North Howard Street**



**East Side of the 100 block of North Howard Street**





**Corner of Park Ave and West Lexington Street facing southeast**



**Northwest corner of West Lexington Street and Liberty Street**

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**APPENDIX A—LIST OF NON-CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES IN PROPOSED FIVE  
& DIME (WESTSIDE) LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

**Buildings:**

**226 West Fayette Street**

**116 West Lexington Street**

**Vacant Lots:**

**105 Clay Street**

**206 West Fayette Street**

**210 North Liberty Street**

**106 Park Avenue**

**215 Park Avenue**



## APPENDIX B

### SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR PRESERVATION PLANNING, IDENTIFICATION, EVALUATION, AND REGISTRATION

From National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 24 - Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning*.

<https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb24/intro.htm>

#### Standards for Preservation Planning:

Standard I. Preservation planning establishes historic contexts.

Standard II. Preservation planning uses historic contexts to develop goals and priorities for the identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of historic properties.

Standard III. The results of preservation planning are made available for integration into broader planning processes.

#### Standards for Identification:

Standard I Identification of historic properties is undertaken to the degree required to make decisions.

Standard II. Results of identification activities are integrated into the preservation planning process.

Standard III. Identification activities include explicit procedures for record-keeping and information distribution.

#### Standards for Evaluation:

Standard I. Evaluation of the significance of historic properties uses established criteria.

Standard II. Evaluation of significance applies the criteria within historic contexts.

Standard III. Evaluation results in a list or inventory of significant properties that is consulted in assigning registration and treatment priorities.

Standard IV. Evaluation results are made available to the public.

#### Standards for Registration:

Standard I. Registration is conducted according to stated procedures.

Standard II. Registration information locates, describes, and justifies the significance and physical integrity of a historic property.

Standard III. Registration information is accessible to the public.

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<sup>i</sup> Shoken, Fred, et. al.. *Retail District National Register Nomination Form*. Baltimore, 1999.

<sup>ii</sup> Lisicky, Michael J.. *Baltimore's Bygone Department Stores: Many Happy Returns*. Charleston, SC: History Press, 2012. (pp. 134)

<sup>iii</sup> Robertson, Kent A.. "Downtown Redevelopment Strategies in the United States: An End-of-the-Century Assessment." *Journal of the American Planning Association*; Autumn 1995, 61.4. (pp. 430)

<sup>iv</sup> Beirne, Francis F.. *Baltimore, A Picture History, 1858-1968*. New York: Hastings House, 1957.

<sup>v</sup> Lisicky, Michael J... (pp. 67-68)

<sup>vi</sup> "Good-bye to Brager-Gutman." *Baltimore Sun*, December 30, 1984.

<sup>vii</sup> Lisicky, Michael J.. (pp. 106)

<sup>viii</sup> *Baltimore Sun*, Classified Ads, July 13, 1921, March 17, 1922, & December 23, 1931.

<sup>ix</sup> "Real Estate Deals and Building News." *Baltimore Sun*, May 3, 1927.

<sup>x</sup> "Buys Old Gas Building." *Baltimore Sun*, May 25, 1917.

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- <sup>xi</sup> Headley, Robert K.. Exit: A History of Movies in Baltimore. Headley, 1974. (pp. 42)
- <sup>xii</sup> Headley, Robert K.. Exit: A History of Movies in Baltimore. Headley, 1974. (pp. 82)
- <sup>xiii</sup> Headley, Robert K.. Exit: A History of Movies in Baltimore. Headley, 1974. (pp. 85-86) and "Garden Theatre Will Open Saturday." Baltimore Sun, January 24, 1915.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Lisicky, Michael J.. (pp. 129-130)
- <sup>xv</sup> Terry, David Taft. "Dismantling Jim Crow: Challenges to Racial Segregation, 1935-1955." *Black History Bulletin*; Jan-Dec 2004, 67, 1-4. (pp. 16)
- <sup>xvi</sup> "14 Stores Added to Orchid List, Bringing Total to 44." The Baltimore Afro-American, February 10, 1945.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Terry, David Taft. (pp. 16)
- <sup>xviii</sup> Lisicky, Michael J.. (pp. 133-134)
- <sup>xix</sup> Dilts, James D. *Baltimore Commercial Architecture Project*. 1992.
- <sup>xx</sup> Maryland Historical Trust. *Bernheimer-Leader Department Store National Register Nomination Form*.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Striner, Richard and Blair, Melissa.. Washington and Baltimore Art Deco. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014. (pp. 137)